

## Food Consumption

Dataset Source	Description	Characteristics	Limitations
<p>U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Expenditure Survey</p> <p>Web address: <a href="http://www.bls.gov/ce/">http://www.bls.gov/ce/</a></p>	<p>Allows researchers to estimate consumption per person for specific categories such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food</li> <li>• Housing</li> <li>• Meat</li> <li>• Beef</li> <li>• Fresh vegetables</li> </ul> <p>Data are reported by income level, region, housing tenure, and other categories.</p>	<p><b><u>Unique Feature:</u></b> Annual data covering consumer spending per household in the U.S., from 1989 to the present, based on a detailed survey of 120,000 households in the U.S., who report what they spent on various consumer items.</p> <p><b><u>Comprehensiveness:</u></b> A very thorough account of household spending,</p> <p><b><u>Levels:</u></b> county, reported by region (Northeast, South, Midwest, West), nation, as well as by demographic categories such as income level, age, race, and occupation.</p> <p><b><u>Accuracy:</u></b> Detailed survey of consumers with well-established protocols. BLS is considered one of the most neutral and reliable of Federal data sources.</p> <p><b><u>Ease of use:</u></b> Easy to access.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not account for different food consumption patterns that may exist in a specific community.</li> <li>• Limited to major categories of food (fresh vegetables, beef, etc., as mentioned above)</li> <li>• Most useful for estimating broader consumer patterns. Trends may be more accurate than specific numbers for a given data point.</li> </ul>
<p>U.S. Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service Per Capita Food Use</p> <p>Web address: <a href="http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-availability-%28per-capita%29-data-system/.aspx#.U9gMj6i5KUY">http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-availability-%28per-capita%29-data-system/.aspx#.U9gMj6i5KUY</a></p>	<p>USDA-ERS publishes annual compilations of per capita consumption of specific foods (for example, beef, eggs, green peppers, apples).</p> <p>Figures are based on industry reports stating how much was produced, which are then adjusted to account for imports and exports of each product.</p>	<p><b><u>Unique Feature:</u></b> Annual data covering per capita food availability in the U.S., generally from 1960 to the present.</p> <p><b><u>Comprehensiveness:</u></b> Only major commercial products are covered.</p> <p><b><u>Levels:</u></b> National.</p> <p><b><u>Accuracy:</u></b> Strictly speaking, this is not a tally of how much was consumed, but rather how much was available, based on production, import, and export reports.</p> <p><b><u>Ease of use:</u></b> Relatively straightforward.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not account for regional differences in food consumption</li> <li>• More accurate covering trends rather than specific levels of consumption for any given year.</li> <li>• Some important foods are not tallied.</li> </ul>